



Recycle This! Newsletter

Newsletter of the Maine State Planning Office, Waste Management & Recycling Program *September 2004

Maine Recycles Week 2004 Have You Filed Your Report?

While the first meeting of the Maine Recycles Week (MRW) steering committee was held in April - not long after Earth Day, the real activity focuses on the fall of the year. The focus of Maine Recycles Week is not meant to be on the committee though, but rather on the recognition of the work of the people. The Committee has approached potential sponsors and set the stage for the promotion of MRW. This year's poster is being distributed about the same time as this September **Recycle, This Newsletter!** We can only hope for another successful year - for MRW and Recycling.



The 2003 winning poster becomes the cover of the 2004 calendar and the object of the MRW 2004 poster.

Again this year, we will focus attention on the school activities; however we encourage the school programs to support each community's recycling efforts. Hopefully, we will be able to make at least the same number of cash awards to schools as we did in 2003 and possibly more. To facilitate judging of the school contests, we will emphasize the need for the teachers' summaries and will allow more time to receive the documentation in the office this year. Classroom presentations will be made to the classrooms of the students recognized in the poster competition, along with having the poster published in the 2005 Maine Recycles Week Calendar.



In the Waste Management and Recycling Program at the State Planning Office, the dauntless challenge of collecting data belongs to Hank Tyler. Many in the Industry and municipal offices are familiar with the call such as: "Good morning...or, eh...

good afternoon! This is Hank Tyler calling. ... Yes.... Hank Tyler - State Planning. I track Recycling.... No, this is the State Planning Office. ... Yes - a gold colored form. Good!... I'm looking forward to getting it! ... Oh, and don't forget to include the cost figures.... Yep.... Oh. ...Okay, we'll send another one up to you."

Hank then shrinks a little more into his seat and mumbles something about: "That was the dog ate my homework excuse! It's amazing how they lose the forms". To which, no one in the office dares reply, until Rhonda utters the now familiar "Yes. Isn't it?"

Over the last several years, the state's recycling data has improved a great deal. In the coming year, the SPO will be producing the next recycling report. For this project, it is always stressed how important it is to have the most current and accurate figures. There should be no problem to gathering the annual figures; however there is. It really does pay to cooperate and file on time. For those of you who have been so helpful, we thank you. For those of you who are still working at it, we thank you too. Let's recognize that in recycling we are all working for the future of Maine! Thank you.

Information about MRW 2004 can always be found on the www.recyclemaine.com web site. You may also reach Bruce White at (207) 287-8053 or bruce.white@maine.gov.

Maine Joins in Event Recycling Project

The Vermont-based Northeast Recycling Council has recently received a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture to study and promote solid waste reduction in the rural northeast at fairs and events. Most communities in Maine will qualify with populations of less than 10,000 people; however the major focus for the State Planning Office will be working with events.



Union Fair photos by Daniel o'Connell (Village Soup)

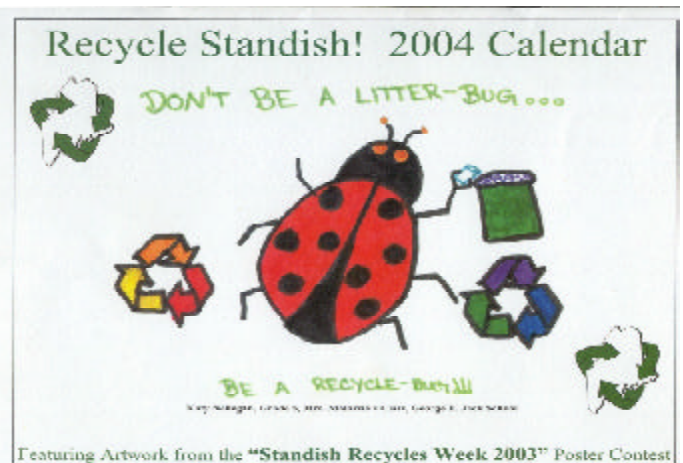
In anticipation of the project, SPO staff addressed the fair presidents at the annual meeting of the Mair Association of Agricultural Fairs in January and carried out a survey of the fairs to better understand the population. With 26 fairs in the state, nineteen fairs responded to the SPO survey. In looking at the responses, just the thought of working with this select group is exciting. The fairs responding are located in counties from Cumberland to Aroostook and Oxford to Knox; operate anywhere from one day to ten days; and may draw anywhere from an estimated 3,000 to 300,000 visitors. In all, the 70 plus percent fairs responding report an estimated total attendance of over 904, 000 guests during 106 days of operation.

Before rushing in with another answer though, it is interesting to note that recycling is not totally absent from this audience – 12 of the 19 fairs reported recycling at least some materials. While support was anticipated and realized from the Common Ground Fair, it is rewarding to note the willingness expressed by some to improve, some to try again, and some just offering a word of encouragement. Even now, we can set a rough goal of decreasing the several hundred tons of waste generated in the fairs by increasing our existing recycling efforts.



The actual rural event waste reduction project will encompass more than the fairs however. There are relatively few other venues that will allow the controls and cross-sections of audience to anticipate such success however. This coming year a planning committee will be organized to work not only with our

population but also to coordinate efforts in this project for the northern New England states. Two pilot locations or events will be selected and finalized with a study made for the two events in the coming year. The committee will then work with the other states - not only analyzing the results of the study but also plans for implementing or improving programs in other similar settings.

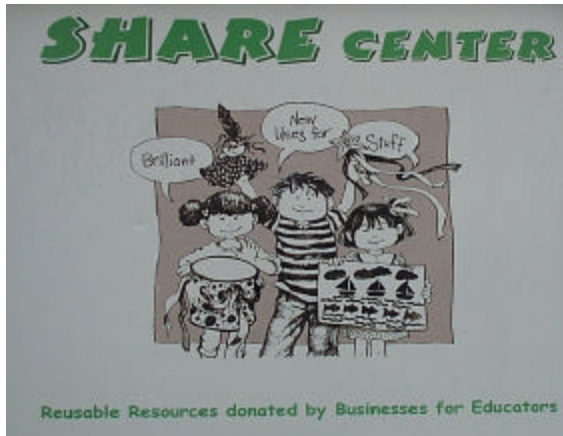


Hats off to Standish!

In 2003, the Standish Recycling Committee and schools partnered in their celebration of recycling with activities that included their own poster contest and featured a town calendar with copies of their winners' posters and the names of all students.

Maine's Educational Reusable Resource Centers

Teachers have always recognized the importance of developing an educational environment which would foster creativity and enhance learning. Teachers have to become resourceful to involve their students in some learning experiences. In the State of Maine, teachers have been assisted with their creative efforts for over 25 years by our educational reusable resource centers. Today three reusable resource centers exist in our state with one having a satellite operation.



A reusable resource center is defined as: "...an innovation for education, business, and the environment that provides a central location for the collection, display, and distribution of quantities of recycled materials, as well as manufacturers' excess materials, such as clean, safe objects of plastic, wood, fabric, paper, and metal, which can be used by teachers, parents, and others as tools for creative learning in classrooms and in the community." This definition is taken from legislation that was enacted in the State of Hawaii in 2003, which created a state reusable resource center.



Everyone's Resource Depot at UMF, Farmington

On the University of Maine at Farmington campus, Everyone's Resource Depot has been moved about until settling into Franklin Hall; however it has served first student teachers and then practicing teachers over many years. The SHAREcenter in Auburn experienced similar development until finally settling into the basement of the old Edward Little High School building. It is the Auburn SHAREcenter that has in recent years established an annex in Topsham. The third facility is known as Ruth's Reusable Resources and is housed in the old Scarborough Junior High School (Bessey School).



Auburn SHAREcenter

The reusable resource centers will often provide workshops or kits to promote projects and the use of their materials. As one center works with another, they will identify materials that have decreased in popularity with their members and propose a swap with another center.

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Maine's Educational Reusable Resource Centers (Cont.)

These facilities are run by dedicated individuals and staff and make use of many community volunteers to carry out their mission. Financing can come from many sources consisting of membership dues to grants. Each facility also has a green zone, which has extended services and materials to non-members in all areas in recent years, by allowing selected materials to be purchased by walk-in customers. Membership dues are normally determined by an annual charge per student and teacher in the school or facility served.



Ruth's Reuseable Resources-the gym of the old Bessey School.

Like any non-profit, funding for staff and operation is always a challenge. You will seldom hear complaints however from those involved. When engaged in conversation, one will normally hear that each facility shares a common wish list: (1) Each could use more space – especially for storage to take advantage of supplies when they are available; (2) Each is always involved in a logistical nightmare of moving materials; and (3) Each, despite their own problems, is ready to assist in seeing that more schools in more parts of the state are conveniently served, if a location and staff can be arranged (They always remind us that they have the material).



Textile room in the Auburn SHAREcenter

In the Waste Management Industry, we can easily understand that there is no shortage of resources available to these centers; however we seldom are aware that they are constantly working with us to reduce the waste stream.



Ruth's Reuseable Resources-the text book room.

Ruth's Reusable Resources, US Route 1, Bessey School, Scarborough. Contact: Ruth Libby; (207) 883-8407; www.ruths.org. Open Wednesday – Friday, 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m.; first two Saturdays of every month, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Everyone's Resource Depot, University of Maine at Farmington, Franklin Hall, 252 Main Street, Farmington. Contact: Mary Ryan; (207) 778-7150. Open Monday and Friday, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to noon.

SHAREcenter (Auburn & Topsham) Contact: Diane Doe, (207) 795-0972; sharecenter@auburnschl.edu
Auburn location, Academy Street, Great Falls School. Open Tuesday, 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.; first two Saturdays of every month, 9:00 a.m. to noon. Topsham location, Republic Ave., Building 376. Open Thursday, 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Waste Diversion

The emphasis on diversion is almost a return to the energy analysis of more than a decade ago. Today, the energy profile is particularly important as each state addresses the Green House Gas Emissions. States are looking to target emissions to return to totals estimated in 1990. For the state of Maine this will be particularly difficult when we account for the absence of nuclear power in the state. The new reporting addresses the letter of the law and helps with the interpretation of fuel consumption in our state.

To be counted for waste diversion, wood waste, tires and other combustibles must have been processed for use as fuel in industrial boilers or waste-to-energy facilities for the generation of heat, steam or electricity. The tonnage so utilized represents the 'diversion' of waste that would have otherwise been disposed of. Waste diversion is a separate (independent) rate that is a percentage of the community's total solid municipal waste. Waste diversion tonnages are included in the overall solid waste and recycling calculations of the report.

Changes in the City of Bangor

Major changes were recently made to Bangor's Recycling facility. In addition to structural alterations, a new baler was added. With the assistance of a grant from the State Planning Office, the new machine and simple alterations have increased capacity and efficiency dramatically in the operation. The new machine is capable of processing and baling up to 40 tons per hour.



Picture shows similar model.

Paper, Plastic, or Cloth?



At a recent meeting of the Maine Resource Recovery Association in Auburn, Ferg Lea from the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments conducted an open forum which solicited comments and questions from our professionals. One comment struck home when someone asked what to do with the familiar plastic shopping bag. Of course, this was asked from the point of view of the operator or attendant who was being inundated by a mass of plastic shopping bags stored in larger plastic bags or perhaps even taking flight into the storm fences or the natural barriers of trees surrounding their facilities.

A few knew about returning the bags to major grocery chains; however even that was thought not always to be possible.

Ask a pupil about the receptacle at the entrance to the large supermarkets and it will take only a short while to find the few that know about them, fewer who are in a family that uses them, and a few cynics that know about them but whose parent always complains about their always being full. At least there is a solution to the plastic – one that was created some time ago when the use of plastic became popular.

It would seem that what is needed is to continue to re-educate ourselves to the alternatives. While at it, rather than a symptom of the problem, it would seem even more beneficial to address our real goal of waste reduction. "Paper, Plastic, or Cloth?" is a great exercise. As the characteristics of each material are explored, many attributes appear favorable; however there always exists favorable benefits to emphasize choice and the often forgotten or ignored strategies to first REDUCE and then REUSE before recycling becomes necessary. This effectively sends the message that it is often the simple things that we do that are so important to make a difference.

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1-800-662-4545 or 207-287-8934
www.recyclemaine.com**



**Maine Recycles Week!
November 8 to 15, 2004**



Mark Your Calendar ! Up and Coming Events !



Maine Resource Recovery Association Annual Meeting

Ground Round, Augusta

September 23, 2004

Contact MRRA @ (207) 942-6772

Northeast Recycling Council Fall Conference

Hotel Northampton, Northampton, MA

October 26-27, 2004

Visit and register online www.nerc.org

Maine Recycles Week 2004

November 8 to 15

MRW 2004 is coming to your town, school, or business - and you're invited!